

1 December 1969

REPORT FROM THE EMPLOYEES' CAFETERIA COMMITTEE

Since its inception last fall, your Employees' Cafeteria Committee has been meeting periodically to consider suggestions and complaints received from Agency employees, to review them with appropriate officials, and to submit recommendations for improving cafeteria services. Following are some of the actions completed or under consideration as well as some general information about our cafeterias:

a. Actions Implemented to Improve Cafeteria Service

(1) The silver has been moved to the entrance of the service area in the large cafeteria to alleviate congestion at the cashiers' lines and thus reduce the cooling-off time of your food.

(2) Larger bowls for salads are being used to reduce spillage and to keep tables a little cleaner.

(3) More explicit prices are being posted in various areas in each serving station.

(4) The temperature in the steam tables has been increased and is being more closely monitored by cafeteria supervisors.

(5) Maintenance of required sanitary measures by cafeteria personnel has been re-emphasized, such as the use of hair nets.

(6) Checks of the efficiency, prices, and operation of other cafeterias have been made.

(7) Self-bussing has been initiated on a trial basis in the north cafeteria.

(8) A light system has been installed which will flash in both cafeterias, in the manager's office, and at other selected locations. The call buttons, which are marked "SERVICE" and are placed in both cafeterias near the cashiers' lines, will permit patrons to summon supervisors in order to register complaints which require immediate attention.

b. Current Action

The covers of the milk compartments will be changed from the lift-up to the sliding type to permit easier access while holding trays.

c. General Information Regarding Government Services, Incorporated (GSI)

(1) GSI is a private corporation which operates on Federal property (owned or leased) by contract with Federal agencies, usually the General Services Administration (GSA) or the Department of the Interior. Its accounts are audited by the Civil Audits Division of the General Accounting Office. GSI cannot contract with any organization other than a Government department or agency. GSI is properly described as a nonprofit-distributing corporation. This means that although the corporation must earn more than it spends in order to remain solvent and to meet the demands that are made upon it every cent of revenue goes into the expansion and improvement of its services.

(2) GSI is not in competition with other business in the Washington area. It is a service organization--not a commercial competitor. It operates at the request of Government agencies to provide food at times, at prices, of a quality, and with a convenience that is important to the Government and to its employees. It has problems not faced by commercial food establishments in that:

(a) Its hours of service are controlled by the agencies housed in the buildings in which it operates.

(b) It serves only one meal in the great majority of its locations.

(c) It is a five-day-a-week operation.

These factors make overhead expenses run disproportionately high.

(3) GSI pays franchise fees instead of rent. Generally speaking, the Government provides only the equipment which is built into or attached to the building, and GSI repairs and replaces the Government's equipment as it becomes obsolete or useless. All other equipment is provided by GSI. In addition, GSI pays on a separate, metered basis for the utilities which it uses for its cafeteria operations. It receives no Federal appropriation or subsidy.

(4) The annual audit conducted by the General Accounting Office guarantees that the books are in order, that contracts are rigorously adhered to, that the Government receives its proper franchise fees, and that the business of the corporation is conducted with complete integrity.

(5) In the contract between GSI and the General Services Administration (GSA), it is stipulated that the prices charged and portions served must be approved by GSA. Any change from the basic schedule must be approved. Also, hours of service must be approved by the agency or department occupying the building in which an operation is conducted.

(6) GSI is subject also to close scrutiny by the U. S. Public Health Service, by local municipal or county health authorities, and by the departments or agencies housed in the buildings in which it operates.

(7) Under its contract with GSA and the Department of the Interior, GSI must operate units needed for the convenience of the Government and its employees wherever they are located and give the same services at the same prices regardless of whether the units operate in the black or in the red.